2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1

608 banks of the Drin to shoot another lad with whose family he was in blood, and who was due to cross the river on the usual inflated sheep-skins. Drin ran swiftly, the sheep-skin float broke loose. Soon the foe was struggling for life in the torrent. The blood-seeker threw aside his rifle, dashed into the torrent and saved his foe at the risk of his own life. They then and there swore brotherhood and the feud ceased. This episode goes to prove that blood-taking is not vengeance. The drowning of the foe would have in no way settled the feud, for expiatory blood would not have been taken.

608 The old bairaktar of Nikaj heard that I was sister to the King of England and believed a blood alliance with me would be for the good of the tribe. The priest at whose house I was, however, laughed at him uproariously and he was hurt; so I never took part in the ritual.

In Albanian this brotherhood is called "Vllam" or "Vlaa me Tenzone" (brother in God). It is also very commonly called "probotin" or "probo," an obvious corruption of the Serb "pobratim." "Birazel" (? Turkish) was, I was told, used also by the Moslems.

The custom extends all over Albania, but of the South I have no details.

Serbs and Montenegrins

In Montenegro I was often assured that the custom was extinct, and I never came across a case. But it possibly still lingered in out-of-the-way places. People who wished to appear "civilized" in Montenegro were very apt to deny the existence of customs they thought would be despised. But it was admitted that "pobratimstvo" had but recently died out. Medakovitch in 1860 mentions it as prevalent.

The Orthodox Church, both in Serbia and Montenegro, adopted this pagan custom and tried to "Christianize" it.

Two forms of pobratimstvo were known:—

1. "Probratimstvo prichestno" (communion pobratimstvo). "Prichest" is the word for the Holy Communion. It was not, however, a case of the two parties taking the Communion together, but a special ceremony. In the Orthodox Church, when the people receive the Communion, the Host is put into the consecrated wine. The pope takes a portion of the soaked bread in a special spoon and gives it to the communicant. The ritual for pobratimstvo, so far as I could learn, was as follows: The two parties went together to church. The pope read a prayer. The two then took a large goblet full of wine, and both, setting their lips to it, sipped at once. They then broke bread and each ate a piece. They sipped and ate together thus three times and then kissed the cross, the Gospels, and the ikon, and lastly each other. It is a curious

[P157-190 blank]

491 animals to cross, and have waded up to my chin at night, with snow on either bank. When the streams are swollen, animals and men are not infrequently drowned. There is or was an old Turkish bridge across the White Drin, from Kukës to the northern bank (fig. 9, *b*). Several wooden bridges crossed the Black Drin in Dibra. On the road from Krasniqi to Shoshi, I have crossed a bridge which consisted of 2 poles, one to walk on, the other a little higher and to one side, to use as a rail.

501 In a few places, ferry boats are available, which operate by the principle of changing the mooring position of the cable after each crossing, so that the power of the stream will push the boat diagonally across to the other bank. There was one such at Kukës across the Black Drin, another at Bureli over the Mati. Other observers have witnessed Ghegs crossing these streams on inflated skins, but I have never seen it.

Navigation in Ghegnia is very limited. Although Nopcsa has a picture of a man in a boat at Merturi, I have seen it only on the lower course of the Drin, between Vau i Denjës and Scutari, where special boatmen ferry passengers to town in a few hours, to save the day's march over the road. These boats are long dugout canoes, usually double. The boatman propels them by sculling, like the gondoliers of Venice. The men who run the ferries, and these boatmen on the lower Drin, are without doubt specialists, as nearly fulltime as the traffic requires. Probably not more than a dozen men ply these trades. Much more numerous are the *kiragis*, the professional horse-drivers who may be seen on all of the roads in Moslem country, and in some Catholic tribes as well. The *kiragis* in our series were Dibra men, but others come from outside the tribal area, from such places as Elbasan and Tirana.

494 463

The *kiragi* is a hard-bitten man, disillusioned early in life by a close observation of human behavior under stress, since all travel in Ghegnia is difficult. He is a non-combatant, a man with no family ties in the regions in which he works, and not worth killing. Anyone who robs him too often will keep trade away and cut off the supply of needed imports. He will rent out anywhere from one to a half dozen horses, to go anywhere the road will take him, and the rate per day has to be argued over at length. He insists on taking grain for his

1/4 [See cat. 116, p. 109.--Analyst]

312 [493] with the household marks of the families which are allowed to used the particular canal concerned in turn--, the screeching ox cart whose two wheels are two meters high because of the muddy roads, and which is drawn by the animals driven on by the goad and harnessed with a yoke on the nape of their necks; the wooden plow whose slade 501 and handle are both of one piece (Figure 9); the swimming bag made of a goat's skin that is blown up and tied to the front of the body, and the raft made of four such skins and a netting of intertwined osier switches, upon which the swimmer puts his clothes bundle (Figure 6). For the rest the people avail themselves of simple and double canoes, with or without side boards that raise the edge of the boat, with or without flanking beams that are nailed to the boat as floaters designed to maintain the equilibrium (Figures 7 and 8); plank boats also occur. To husk the corn a mat of intertwined switches is placed on top of four posts rammed into the ground, and the corn cobs are then beaten with sticks one and one-half meters long, until the kernels have all fallen 411 to the ground through the plaited meshes (Figure 11). The long flint-locks, which are quite often beautiful old heirlooms, have only survived still in the south; they are being replaced by the modern repeating rifles, the pistols, and the handjars, the knife with the bone handle 221 of the shank of a cow, and the revolvers. The Albanians are to a 241 large extent farmers and in part migrating herders who commute back and forth between their winter quarters in the plains towards the Adriatic, where they work their fields, and their summer settlements on the highland pastures to which they return after they have finished working [312] the fields. During wanderings in the highlands they rub last year's mountain snow on sheets of rock that have been scorched by the sun, [202] in order to get water. The extensive settlement of the mountains has given rise to the development of a good signalling system by means 183 of shooting and shouting and their transmission. Certain old customs have been preserved that bespeak a life in firmly joined group combinations. To these belong the abducting of the bride, bride purchasing, the engagment of children, sworn blood brotherhood, and revenge for [162] murder. The Albanians are approximately seven-tenths Mohammedan, 771 two-tenths Greek Orthodox, and one-tenth Roman Catholic. Nevertheless, all kinds of remnants have been preserved attesting an earlier spiritual life of the people which practiced a clairvoyant contemplation of supernatural powers and processes, basing its knowledge and its actions on the basis of its magical connection with these mysterious 000 forces. Thus their practices and beliefs included: building sacrifices,

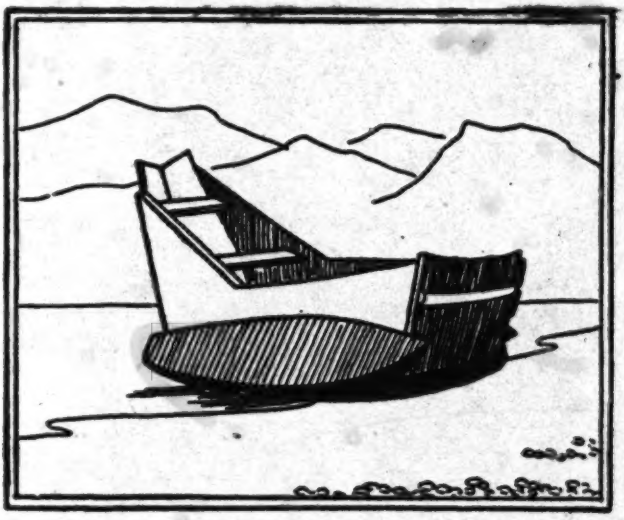
[see 1: Karutz, E1 Europe, cat. 116, p. 69a -- Analyst]

2:Edmonds T-3 (1926?) 1927 E13 Balkan Peoples
Albania E61

At Podgradetz

361 [226] Podgradetz is a pretty little town situated at the water's edge. Fishing is its main industry, the boats used being of a curious and cumbersome build unlike any craft I have seen elsewhere. It is also the distributing centre for local produce, and on market days is a lively little place, packed to the limit with peasants, donkeys, horses, mules, sheep,

[301]



A PODGRADETZ FISHING-BOAT

cattle, goats, sellers of this, buyers of that, sacks of wheat, maize, rye, rolls of home-made cloth, eggs, chickens, dairy produce, and all the various commodities necessary for the life of the district. On days other than market days it is, however, quiet enough, and there are few people about save some café loungers, half-a-dozen idle gendarmes, a few